

Speech by Under Secretary for Management Patrick F. Kennedy
NEC Dedication Ceremony
March 15, 2013

I am honored to represent the State Department at the opening of this New Embassy Compound. I am grateful to the Government of Senegal for its warm welcome.

With Senegal, the United States has a solid partner in West Africa. On the continent, Senegal is widely recognized as a leader in terms of its democratic political culture, as exhibited by the elections that took place last spring, and the peaceful and orderly transfer of power that followed those elections.

We are also proud of our cooperation with Senegal's well-trained and disciplined military. The participation of Senegal's armed forces in international and regional peacekeeping missions is greatly appreciated by the international community.

During the presidential election in the spring, we saw soldiers and police upholding democratic principles by steering clear of politics. Senegal rightly deserves many compliments about the expertise of this very professional body, and we thank you for that.

The Obama Administration's comprehensive strategy on Sub-Saharan Africa is based on four pillars: first, to promote opportunity and development; second, to spur economic growth, trade, and investment; third, to advance peace and security; and fourth, to strengthen democratic institutions. Our partnership with Senegal embodies all four of those pillars.

This new Embassy building embodies our strong and lasting relationship with Senegal. I would like to call attention especially to the high-tech information resource center that students, faculty, and researchers are welcome to visit.

Our projects in Senegal also serve as symbols of our deep and abiding friendship. This year, we will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Peace Corps in Senegal.

MCC-Senegal is in the midst of its five-year compact. MCC is responding to Senegal's wish to reduce poverty and increase food security by conducting major infrastructure projects in both the North and the South.

Through our Military to Military cooperation, we conduct over fifty exchanges each year involving hundreds of Senegalese and U.S. military personnel. Over the last three years we have provided over USD 3M in training focused on capacity building for the Senegalese officer corps and over USD 1M in funding for the purchase of military equipment. Through these activities we are build mutual understanding and coordination.

Part of our long-term cooperation is the Africa Partnership Station, which builds the capacity of Senegal and other African countries to address their most pressing concerns such as fighting piracy, combating drug trafficking, and protecting national fishing zones. Just yesterday (March

14), our countries concluded the most recent “Saharan Express” military exercise, which I heard was a resounding success.

And of course, USAID, which has been operating in Senegal for over 50 years. The principal goals of USAID in Senegal remain: helping achieve food security and economic, political, and social development in line with the priorities of the Senegalese government.

We thank Senegal for their active partnership in all these key areas of cooperation.

As President Obama has said to the government and people of Senegal, going into the future, America will be with you. As a partner. As a friend. This new U.S. embassy is a symbol of our enduring friendship.